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### BOOK REVIEWS

MODERN CLINICAL SYPHILOLOGY. Diagnosis-Treatment-Case Studies. By John H. Stokes, M.D., Professor of Dermatology and Syphilology in the School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, formerly Head of the Section on Dermatology and Syphilology, the Mayo Clinic. Octavo of 1,144 pages, with 865 illustrations and text figures. Cloth, 55s. net. W. B. Saunders Company, Ltd., London and Philadelphia.

READERS who studied an article on latent syphilis by Professor Stokes in the October, 1926, number of this Journal would expect to find this book under review a thorough and a sane treatise. They would not be disappointed. The present work is almost literally "all about" syphilis, and every page reveals the author's determination to get his readers' minds right into the heart of the business. For his purpose he is eminently qualified, as he can speak on an unrivalled experience gathered with considerably more than average intelligence. He leaves nothing to chance, either in his teaching or the management of his cases, if we may judge by the detailed descriptions, profusely illustrated, of enormously detailed techniques of examination and treatment. He reveals to his reader the things which may be overlooked in examination, the right and the wrong ways of extracting information, of managing patients, and, above all, of carrying out those manipulative measures on which the comfort and well-being of the patient depends. No detail seems to be omitted, from the correct way to sharpen needles to the exact position of the patient for the receipt of a deep subcutaneous injection, and reasons, with illustrative case records, serve to drive the lessons home. In such an excellent work it is difficult to choose any portion which is especially deserving of praise, but perhaps that which has pleased us most is the author's breadth of vision. His patient is not a flask into which so many grammes of certain metals are to be introduced. He is a human being with a psychology to be studied, with perhaps many hidden lesions which may complicate the management of his case and its outlook, and maybe with a metabolism which is not average. It is possible that the specialist may not agree in every detail with the author's teaching. For this the author is prepared when he asks for "a tolerant hearing and a kindly, if critical, judgment." In the kindly spirit for which the author pleads in the critics of his work, we might mention that perhaps some of us would be afraid of alarming our patients in treatment centres with the ritual of the operating theatre which attends an injection of an arsenobenzol compound in the author's service, but we recognise that we would prefer that he, rather than someone equally skilled with the needle but with looser ideas on asepsis, should treat ourselves. In this connection the illustrator does not seem always

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to have depicted the manipulations in accord with the author's principles. Thus we note on p. 212 a worker pipetting off serum for intra-spinal injection with the aid of a mouth tube (a risky method, we always think), the attendant is wearing no mask, and the bottles for reception of the serum appear not to be capped, though they are standing upright. In the figure on the opposite page the workers engaged in salvarsanising the serum are masked and capped, but figure 99, on p. 211, shows a worker without mask or cap, and with ungloved hands manipulating an instrument to loosen a clot in a tube, which is held nearly upright. An error appears to have crept into p. 193, where mention is made of "Neoarsphenamin" being "sold in a concentrated glucose solution for use in tropical countries (English manufacture, Boot)." We presume the author is here referring to the combination of the arsenobenzol base, "592," with glucose, which is sold as Stabilarisan. We are not inclined now to agree with the statement on p. 248 that sodium thiosulphate nullifies the therapeutic effect of arsenobenzol compounds, since Dale showed that solution of "914" in sodium thiosulphate did not raise its curative dose in experimental trypanosomiasis, and Clements, at the St. Thomas's Hospital centre, found that the same solution did not seem to interfere with the power of "914" to cause rapid disappearance of *Sp. pallida* from the discharges of early lesions. A reader studying the table on pp. 546 and 547, showing the results of treatment of early syphilis by different workers, would be attracted by those of Silberstein, as the table indicates that the cases were observed for ten years. Reference to the original article, which is well worth study, shows that the period mentioned should be one-quarter to ten years.

But these are very minor criticisms, and in no way alter our view that there is no work on syphilis to equal this, which, in 1,144 pages with no less than 865 illustrations, presents the subject in a way which cannot fail to be of immense help to every reader, whether he be general practitioner or syphilologist.

L. W. H.

SCOURGES OF TO-DAY. By E. T. Burke, D.S.O., M.B., Ch.B. This book forms one of the series of Modern Health Books, edited by Professor D. Fraser Harris, M.D., and published by the Scientific Press (Faber & Gwyer).

In a space of 166 pages Dr. Burke has endeavoured to give an account of the "Four grim horsemen" which constitute the scourges of modern civilisation—venereal disease, cancer, tuberculosis and alcoholism. According to the editor's introduction, the "Modern Health Books" are written "for the benefit of the public." This book may, therefore, be taken as an exposition of the above-mentioned four diseases suitable for the education and information of that growing section of the public which is to-day interesting itself in the science of preventive medicine. As such, the book will undoubtedly do much to inform public opinion on the problems associated with these diseases, but one's only doubt is that possibly through an overstatement, or perhaps one should say an over-emphasis, the information may be acquired in the form of fear. Especially, perhaps, is this so in the section dealing with venereal disease. As an example, the statement, "The syphilitic dies therefore from . . . locomotor ataxia, valvular disease of the heart